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ON
VAPOUR BATHING,

AS FOUNDED BY

B. DOMINICETI, M.D. IN 1755, .

AND NOW CONDUCTED AT

THE ROYAL BATHS,

2, SUFFOLK PLACE, PALL MALL EAST, LONDON;

AND

1, CALVERLEY PROMENADE,

TUNBRIDGE WELLS;

INCLUDING REMARKS ON

SHAMPOOING, TURKISH-MEDICATED, & HUMID-SULPHUR
VAPOUR, COLD AND WARM DOUCHE,

ARTIFICIAL WARM AND SHOWER BATHS.

BY

W. SEAMAN,

PROPRIETOR OF THESE ESTABLISHMENTS.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS:

PRINTED BY J. CLIFFORD.



ON VAPOUR BATHING.

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IT is much to be regretted, and—on reflection—it is unaccountable, that Vapour Bathing, from time immemorial the almost universal remedy for the promotion of health in the eastern hemisphere, should be so tardy in its progress in Great Britain, especially as most other eastern luxuries have, from time to time, been introduced and adopted.

That Vapour Baths were known to the ancients it would be almost an offence to state to the classical historian, yet it may not be amiss to make a few quotations to show the general reader their great utility.

Cicero is stated to have kept himself in *good health* by *steaming* and friction.

Pliny, the elder, in speaking of the utility of medicated vapour baths, says, “ that

for six hundred years before his time, other medicinal aids were hardly known in Rome."

In addition to the testimony above adduced, Hippocrates, Galen, Celsus, and many others, agree in stating, "that Rome, when at the height of her glory, contained eight hundred and fifty-six public baths, and *not one* hospital." "Their vapourous baths were by some called hypocausta,* by others, laconia, or sudatia."

But it would be endless to point out the particular circumstances and periods in history relating to the adoption of vapour baths; the chief object of the writer is so far attained as to prove that the origin of vapour bathing is from that part of the universe now called Turkey, and that it was first introduced into England in the year 1755, by B. Dominiciti, M.D., being the first of the kind which ever appeared in Europe. His first establishment was at Bristol for nine

* Hypocaustum, (from *ὑκὸ*, under, and *χάωω*, to burn,) a stove, or an apartment for bathing or sweating, which is heated by a fire under its floor.

years, *i.e.* until 1764, when their celebrity becoming known, Dr. Dominiciti was induced by the persuasion of the late Sir John Fielding to settle in the metropolis, which he did in May, 1764, in Milbank-street, Westminster. In 1799, it was removed to Panton-square, and up to the present period these Baths, with the necessary friction or shampooing, have been attended with the most decided success.

Nearly half a century since vapour bathing was introduced by the late Dr. Lind, R.N., on his return from India and China, into the Royal Hospital for Seamen, at Haslar, where the writer of these pages witnessed their wonderful effects. His country's service subsequently called him to India, where he most diligently sought after every information on that important subject, but the Indian method being so truly rustic,* although useful, he

* The Indian vapour bath is simply thus : a kedgeriee pot, in which they generally boil rice, &c., is half filled with water ; a paste of chunam, or of coarse meal, is laid over it ; when the water boils, a hole is made through the

could only find his curiosity gratified at Calcutta, where some Armenians, on speculation from Turkey, established the true Turkish method of vapour bathing and shampooing; which establishment is now known by the name of the Armenian Baths. It was there the present proprietor of the Dominicitis Baths, now called the Royal Baths, at 9, Suffolk-place, Pall Mall East, became more perfectly acquainted with the true method of preparing and administering vapour baths, and the great support he has received from the faculty (for whom he ever feels the highest respect) is the best proof of their superiority.

At the above establishment, the advantages of the Indian and Turkish methods of Vapour Bathing and Shampooing are united, and the Proprietor feels confident there has been nothing of the kind offered to the British public equal to it either in efficacy or cleanliness; there are also Warm, Shower, and Douche

said cover of paste, and the steam ascends; the patient sits over it on a stool, covering himself with a mat, skin, or other covering, according to circumstances.

Baths: the latter was copied from the Douche Baths at Paris, where also the preparation of the Barege and other artificial baths was obtained.

The Proprietor thus far lays no claim to invention; his only aim is improvement, which he has been able to attain by personal experience in the various parts of the globe he has visited: the only point to which he most particularly invites attention, is the *Humid Sulphur Vapour Bath*; having for many years noticed the unpleasantness and often inutility, of *dry* fumigations, in cutaneous complaints especially, he submitted his plan to some of the most distinguished of the profession, who approved its principle and favoured it with their patronage. The *Medico-Chirurgical Review*,* of June, 1822, thus mentions it, at page 223 of that Journal—"Vapour Baths, Mr. Seaman (5, Downing-street,† Westminster,) has fitted

* Edited by Dr. James Johnson, Physician to his Majesty.

† His former residence.

up the *Humid* Sulphur Vapour and other Baths, at his residence in Downing-street, and we can safely reecomend them whenever they are deemed advisable by the medieal attendant."

The same Author, in No. 3, Jan. 1825, writes as follows:—

"Mr. Seaman has fitted up, in a very superior manner, every kind of warm, vapour, eold, and shampooing baths, at his house, No. 9, Suffolk-place, Haymarket, where the Faeculty and the Publie will meet with every aecommodation, and on the most moderate terms.

"8, Suffolk Place, 22nd Dec. 1824."

~~As~~ the Proprietor most studiously wishes to avoid even the suspieion of charlatanism, by publishing names, or initials of A. B. or C. D., he at the same time is prepared with numerous and most respectable referenees to those who may call at his Baths.

MRS. SEAMAN pays every attention per-

sonally to the Ladies, and has the approbation and patronage of the most exalted personages.

WM. SEAMAN.

Royal Baths, 9, Suffolk Place, Pall Mall East,
12th Oct. 1832.

